

CLAIMS

1. A method of providing means for detecting counterfeit articles and/or for detecting unauthorised tampering of
5 articles/article packaging, the method comprising the steps of:

i) determining one or more properties of an at least one primary label or of an article to which at least one primary label is, or is to be, attached; and

10 ii) encoding at least one secondary label with information about the one or more properties determined in step (i), such that there exists an association between the information contained in the or each secondary label and one or more of the properties of the or each primary
15 label, or of an article to which the or each primary label is attached, wherein the or each primary label is provided on an article contained within a container holding a plurality of articles, and wherein the secondary label is provided on the outside of the container.

20 2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the property determined in step (i) is the information encoded by one or more labels provided on the consumer product(s) packed at predetermined positions within the container.

25 3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the or each primary label acts as a presence indicator.

30 4. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the property determined in step i) represents the positional properties of the or each primary label, or the article to which the or each primary label is, or is to be, attached.

35 5. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the property determined in step i) represents the information encoded by the or each primary label.

6. A method of detecting counterfeit articles and/or detecting unauthorised tampering of articles/article packaging, the method comprising the steps of:

- 5 i) determining one or more given properties of an at least one primary label, or the article to which at least one primary label is attached, the or each primary label being provided on an article contained within a container holding a plurality of articles;
- 10 ii) determining the information encoded by an at least one secondary label, the secondary label being provided on the outside of the container; and
- 15 iii) checking for the existence of a predetermined association between the information determined in steps i) and ii).

7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the property determined in step (i) is the information encoded by one or more labels provided on the consumer product(s) packed

20 at predetermined positions within the container.

8. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the property determined in step i) is the positional properties of the or each primary label, or the article to which the or each

25 primary label is attached.

9. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the property determined in step i) is the information encoded by the or each primary label.

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10. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the or each primary label comprises remotely detectable magnetic material.

35 11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said magnetic material comprises low coercivity, high permeability

magnetic material.

12. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein
the information is obtained in step (i) by means of a
5 reading device which employs an interrogation field
comprising an ac field arranged so as to be parallel with
the preferred axis of permeability of the magnetic
material.

10 13. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 11,
wherein the information determined in step (i) is obtained
by means of a reading device which employs an
interrogation field comprising a high amplitude, low
frequency scanning field and a low amplitude, high
15 frequency field.

14. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein
the or each primary label is capable of being read by
means of a reading device which operates in accordance
20 with non-contact interrogation techniques.

15. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein
the or each primary label is capable of being read by
means of a reading device operating in accordance with
25 techniques which do not require a line of sight between
the reading device and the or each primary label.

16. A system for detecting counterfeit articles and/or
detecting unauthorised tampering of articles/article
30 packaging, the system comprising at least one primary
label provided on an article contained within a container
holding a plurality of articles, and at least one
secondary label provided on the outside of the container,
wherein there exists an association between the
35 information contained in the or each secondary label and
one or more of the properties of the or each primary

label.

17. A system as claimed in claim 16, wherein the
information contained in the or each secondary label is
5 related to the information encoded by the label attached
to at least one article packaged at a predetermined
location within the container.

18. A system as claimed in claim 16, wherein the
10 information contained in the or each secondary label
represents the positional properties of the or each
primary label, or the article to which the or each primary
label is attached, within the container.

15 19. A system as claimed in claim 16, 17 or 18, wherein
there exists an association in the data content of the or
each primary label and the or each secondary label.

20. A system as claimed in any one of claims 16 to 19,
20 wherein the or each primary label comprises remotely
detectable magnetic material.

21. A system as claimed in claim 20, wherein said magnetic
material comprises low coercivity, high permeability
25 magnetic material.

22. A system as claimed in any one of claims 16 to 21,
wherein the primary information carrier is provided with a
simpler code than the secondary information label, and
30 wherein the secondary information label is encoded with
information about the information contained in the primary
information label.